

**CLAIMS:****What is claimed is:**

1 Sub a! 1. A method in a data processing system for remotely  
2 recovering a client computer system's primary password, said  
3 primary password being required prior to said client  
4 computer system being accessible by a user, said client  
5 computer system being coupled to a server computer system  
6 utilizing a network, said method comprising the steps of:

7 prior to said client computer system completing a boot  
8 process:

9 prompting a user to enter said primary password;  
10 and

11 providing an interrogative password method in  
12 response to an incorrect entry of said primary  
13 password, said primary password being recoverable from  
14 said server computer system by said client computer  
15 system utilizing said interrogative password method  
16 prior to said client computer system completing said  
17 boot process.

1 2. The method according to claim 1, further comprising the  
3 step of providing said interrogative password method  
4 including an question and correct answer pair.

1 3. The method according to claim 2, further comprising the  
2 step of recovering said primary password from said server  
3 computer system in response to a successful completion of  
4 said interrogative method.

1       4. The method according to claim 3, further comprising the  
2       steps of:

3               displaying said question included within said  
4       interrogative method utilizing said client computer system  
5       in response to an incorrect entry of said primary password;  
6       and

7               prompting a user to enter an answer to said question,  
8       wherein an entry of said correct answer will successfully  
9       complete said interrogative method.

1       5. The method according to claim 4, further comprising the  
2       step of:

3               establishing a unique client identifier; and

4               storing said question and said correct answer together  
5       with said unique client identifier in said server computer  
6       system.

1       6. The method according to claim 5, further comprising the  
2       steps of:

3               transmitting a request for said question utilizing said  
4       client computer system in response to an incorrect entry of  
5       said primary password, said request including said unique  
6       client identifier; and

7               transmitting said question utilizing said server  
8       computer system in response to a receipt of said request.

1       7. The method according to claim 6, further comprising the  
2       steps of:

3               transmitting a proposed answer to said question  
4       utilizing said client computer system;

5               determining whether said proposed answer is said  
6       correct answer utilizing said server computer system.

1       8. The method according to claim 7, further comprising the  
2       step of prior to executing said interrogative password  
3       method, permitting a user to initially supply said question  
4       and correct answer pair.

1       9. The method according to claim 8, further comprising the  
2       step of prohibiting access to said client computer system by  
3       prohibiting transmission of said primary password in  
4       response to said proposed answer being unequal to said  
5       correct answer.

1       10. The method according to claim 9, further comprising the  
2       step of completing said boot process in response to said  
3       client computer system receiving said primary password from  
4       said server computer system.

1       11. The method according to claim 10, further comprising  
2       the step of encrypting transmissions between said client  
3       computer system and said server computer system utilizing an  
4       encryption key pair method.

1           12. A data processing system for remotely recovering a  
2           client computer system's primary password, said primary  
3           password being required prior to said client computer system  
4           being accessible by a user, said client computer system  
5           being coupled to a server computer system utilizing a  
6           network, comprising:

7                           prior to said client computer system completing a boot  
8                           process:

9                           means for prompting a user to enter said primary  
10                           password; and

11                           means for providing an interrogative password  
12                           method in response to an incorrect entry of said  
13                           primary password, said primary password being  
14                           recoverable from said server computer system by said  
15                           client computer system utilizing said interrogative  
16                           password method prior to said client computer system  
17                           completing said boot process.

18           13. The system according to claim 12, further comprising  
19                           means for providing said interrogative password method  
20                           including an question and correct answer pair.

21           14. The system according to claim 13, further comprising  
22                           means for recovering said primary password from said server  
23                           computer system in response to a successful completion of  
24                           said interrogative method.

1 15. The system according to claim 14, further comprising:

2 means for displaying said question included within said  
3 interrogative method utilizing said client computer system  
4 in response to an incorrect entry of said primary password;  
5 and

6 means for prompting a user to enter an answer to said  
7 question, wherein an entry of said correct answer will  
8 successfully complete said interrogative method.

1 16. The system according to claim 15, further comprising:

2 means for establishing a unique client identifier; and  
3 means for storing said question and said correct answer  
4 together with said unique client identifier in said server  
5 computer system.

1 17. The system according to claim 16, further comprising:

2 means for transmitting a request for said question  
3 utilizing said client computer system in response to an  
4 incorrect entry of said primary password, said request  
5 including said unique client identifier; and

6 means for transmitting said question utilizing said  
7 server computer system in response to a receipt of said  
8 request.

1       18. The system according to claim 17, further comprising:

2               means for transmitting a proposed answer to said  
3               question utilizing said client computer system;

4               means for determining whether said proposed answer is  
5               said correct answer utilizing said server computer system.

1       19. The system according to claim 18, further comprising  
2       means for prior to executing said interrogative password  
3       method, permitting a user to initially supply said question  
4       and correct answer pair.

1       20. The system according to claim 19, further comprising  
2       means for prohibiting access to said client computer system  
3       by prohibiting transmission of said primary password in  
4       response to said proposed answer being unequal to said  
5       correct answer.

1       21. The system according to claim 20, further comprising  
2       means for completing said boot process in response to said  
3       client computer system receiving said primary password from  
4       said server computer system.

1       22. The system according to claim 21, further comprising  
2       means for encrypting transmissions between said client  
3       computer system and said server computer system utilizing an  
4       encryption key pair method.

1       23. A data processing system for remotely recovering a  
2       client computer system's primary password, said primary  
3       password being required prior to said client computer system  
4       being accessible by a user, said client computer system  
5       being coupled to a server computer system utilizing a  
6       network, comprising:

7               means prior to said client computer system completing a  
8       boot process, for prompting a user to enter said primary  
9       password;

10               means prior to said client computer system completing a  
11       boot process, for providing an interrogative password method  
12       including an question and correct answer pair in response to  
13       an incorrect entry of said primary password, said primary  
14       password being recoverable from said server computer system  
15       by said client computer system utilizing said interrogative  
16       password method prior to said client computer system  
17       completing said boot process;

18               means for recovering said primary password from said  
19       server computer system in response to a successful  
20       completion of said interrogative method.

21               means for displaying said question included within said  
22       interrogative method utilizing said client computer system  
23       in response to an incorrect entry of said primary password;

24               means for prompting a user to enter an answer to said  
25       question, wherein an entry of said correct answer will  
26       successfully complete said interrogative method;

27               means for establishing a unique client identifier;

28           means for storing said question and said correct answer  
29           together with said unique client identifier in said server  
30           computer system;

31           means for transmitting a request for said question  
32           utilizing said client computer system in response to an  
33           incorrect entry of said primary password, said request  
34           including said unique client identifier;

35           means for transmitting said question utilizing said  
36           server computer system in response to a receipt of said  
37           request;

38           means for transmitting a proposed answer to said  
39           question utilizing said client computer system;

40           means for determining whether said proposed answer is  
41           said correct answer utilizing said server computer system;

42           means for prior to executing said interrogative  
43           password method, permitting a user to initially supply said  
44           question and correct answer pair;

45           means for prohibiting access to said client computer  
46           system by prohibiting transmission of said primary password  
47           in response to said proposed answer being unequal to said  
48           correct answer;

49           means for completing said boot process in response to  
50           said client computer system receiving said primary password  
51           from said server computer system; and

52           means for encrypting transmissions between said client  
53           computer system and said server computer system utilizing an  
54           encryption key pair method.